TOTNES

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report

OF

Mr. Henry Sandford Johnson,

Medical Officer of Health,

For the Year 1904.

TOTNES:
Printed at the "Times" and "Western Guardian" Offices.

TO THE

TOTNES

Rural District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

For the year ending December 31st, 1904.

Gentlemen,

I have again the pleasure of laying my annual report before you, and in it you will find, as usual, a resume of the general health of the District; the number of zymotic diseases reported; also the number of births and deaths, as well as the principal works carried out during the year.

The district is, as you are aware, divided into two sub-districts, for the purposes of carrying out the sanitary work. No. 1 sub-district, of which Mr Tollit is the sanitary inspector, comprises the parishes of Ashprington, Berry Pomeroy, Churston Ferrers, Cornworthy, Dittisham, Dartington, Halwell, Harberton, Morleigh, Marldon, Littlehempston, Kingswear, and Stoke Gabriel, the population of the combined parishes being 6,721, and the acreage 32,231 acres.

No. 2. District, of which Mr. Ellis is the sanitary inspector, comprises the parishes of Buckfastleigh West Diptford, Dean Prior, Holne, Rattery, North Huish, Staverton, South Brent and Ugborough. In the latter parish is situated the Plymouth Borough Asylum, which I take as a separate district. The population of the combined parishes is 5,127, and the acreage 44,750 acres, and the population

of the Plymouth Borough Asylum is 333. The combined population of the two districts is 11,848, and the combined acreage 76,961 acres.

BIRTHS.—During the year 1904 the births of 259 children were registered, 129 males and 130 females. I append the number in each registration district:—

	Males.	Females.
Ugborough	42	41
Harberton	27	22
Buckfastleigh West	15	15
Paignton	12	14
Dartmouth	13	16
Brixham	3	8
Totnes Rural	18	14

DEATHS.—During the year 1904, there were registered 167 deaths, exclusive of Plymouth Borough Asylum, where 22 deaths occurred. These figures give a death rate of 14 per thousand in the Totnes Rural District, which is higher than in some previous years, and 66.3 per 1,000 in the Plymouth Borough Asylum, which is lower than 1903. Of the deaths registered, 89 were females and 78 males. Under the first year 34 deaths were registered; from the 1st to the 5th year, 15; from the 5th to the 15th year 3; from 15th to 25th year, 4; from the 25th to the 65th year, 39; whilst above the 65th year 72, of whom 28 were over 80 years, and one over 90. Comparing the births, 259, with the deaths, 167, gives a natural increase of 92 in the population. The deaths were classified as follows:—Enteric fever 2, diphtheria 3, whooping cough 6, membranous croup 1, epidemic influenza, 2, enteritis 2, other septic diseases 1, phthisis pulmonalis 3, other tubercular diseases 3, cancer 19, bronchitis 17, pneumonia 11, premature birth 4, diseases and accidents of parturition 4, heart disease 24, accidents 3, whilst from all other diseases 62, making a total of 167, an increase of 31 on the year 1903, when 136 deaths were registered. The 22 deaths in the Plymouth Borough Asylum were classified as follows:—Phthisis pulmonalis 6, pleurisy 1, all other 15, total 22, which is less than the previous year, when 30 deaths occurred. There are two points in the above table, which I would like to call your attention to; the first is the great

increase of the infant mortality over previous years, and the second is the large number of deaths from cancer. To these causes alone may be attributed the increase of the number of deaths over the previous year. I feel that a large number of infants die from improper feeding, and the want of knowledge of those in charge of them, and I consider that much good would be done if some means were adopted where instructions could be given to those in charge of infants as to their proper feeding and attention. I append the number of deaths in each registration district, exclusive of the Plymouth Borough Asylum in the Ugborough district:—

	Males.	Females.
Ugborough	19	35
Harberton	14	17
Buckfastleigh West	8	11
Dartmouth	7	7
Totnes Rural	14	11
Brixham	7	1
Paignton	9	7

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE ACT.—Under the above Act 39 cases were reported during the year, which is nine more than the previous. The cases were classified as follows:—Scarlatina 15, diphtheria 12, enteric fever 6, membranous croup 1, erysipelas 5. The cases of scarlatina were scattered over both districts, and was of a mild type. The diphtheria cases were confined to the Ugborough Registration District, and I regret to say that three deaths resulted. Of the six cases of enteric fever, three were imported. One death occurred amongst them. Of the other three one was caused by defective drains, one from poultry being kept in a dirty state too close to dwelling house, and the other supervened on pneumonia. I was unable to discover the cause of croup,and the cases of erysipelas were of a mild type. Every case, on the receipt of notice, was visited, and directions given as to the sanitary precautions necessary to be taken, whilst any sanitary defects were immediately attended to. There was no outbreak of epidemc influenza during the year. It was found necessary to close the schools at Landscove and Staverton in consequence of outbreaks of measles.

DAIRIES have been regularly inspected, and as a rule were found clean and in a sanitary condition. In only one case was it found necessary to withhold the license to sell milk until some sanitary improvements were carried out, and I always insist on having no meat or other perishable article of food kept in the dairy.

COW HOUSES have been regularly visited, and cleanliness insisted on. It was found necessary in some instances to complain of the condition of the floors and drainage, but they were put in order on receipt of the usual notice.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES have been kept under observation, and have been regularly visited, and cleanliness insisted on. Although in a few instances some trouble has been experienced, still the necessary work has been carried out on receipt of the usual notice.

WATER SUPPLY.—This has held out fairly well during the year. I am pleased to state that the long-needed increased supply at Tuckenhay, in the parish of Ashprington, has been obtained, but I regret to say that nothing has been done to increase the supply at Scoriton, in the parish of Buckfastleigh West. A Local Government Board Inspector held an inquiry and visited the proposed increased supply, but unfortunately, owing to the restrictions required, and the heavy cost, it was found impossible to carry out the scheme. Dean Church Town is about to have its supply increased. which I have advised for some time. An increased supply has also been brought into the School and hamlet of Shinner's Bridge, in the parish of Dartington, and Washbourne village in the parish of Halwell, has had its water supply increased. There is every prospect that, before long, the water supply to the growing town of South Brent, will be materially increased, as a Local Government Board inquiry has been held, and a loan granted for the purpose. Marldon is waiting for the completion of the Paignton Water Scheme, which passes through the parish, for an increase in its water supply.

The following improvements have been carried out, also suggested improvements:—

No. 1. DISTRICT.

ASHPRINGTON.—New drains at Tuckenhay.

BERRY POMEROY.—New drains at Longcombe.

CORNWORTHY.—Several new closets erected and increased water supply under consideration.

DITTISHAM.—Sewer on fore shore ought to be extended. Main sewer ought also to be extended to top of Manor Street.

HARBERTON.—Many new cottages erected; all connected with village water supply.

MORLEY.—It is proposed to extend water supply.

STOKE GABRIEL—Sewer extended to Coombe Shute.

No. 2 DISTRICT.

NORTH HUISH.—New pump in village.

STAVERTON.—New system of sewerage to hamlet, known as Almshouses. New sewerage to Westpark Cottages.

SOUTH BRENT.—New drains laid in Church Street, Prospect Place, and back of Pack Horse Hotel.

UGBOROUGH.—A portion of the hamlet of Bittaford Bridge has had a new sewer laid, and a large cesspit constructed, and Soper's cottages have had a new sewer laid in addition. Plans for a new system of sewerage for the village of Ugborough, are under consideration, and I have no doubt but that the work will be carried out in a short time. In addition to the above, many minor improvements have been carried out, such as the abolition of insanitary closets, and the erection of sanitary ones, relaying the defective drains, and the removal of defective pigs houses and manure heaps.

Several cases of overcrowding were reported, but on the usual notice they were abated. Several applications for the occupation of new houses were received, and it was only found necessary in a few instances to defer the granting of them until certain sanitary requirements were carried out.

PROSECUTIONS.—It was only found necessary to resort to legal proceedings in one instance at Moorcot Farm, Diptford, where the owner refused to carry out the sanitary requirements of the Council. An order was obtained from the Magistrates.

I have tested many samples of water during the year, and only had occasion to condemn two.

As usual disinfectants have been freely distributed.

I have, in company with the Sanitary Inspectors, regularly visited every parish in the District, and have regularly reported to the Council any matter requiring their attention.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT.—These have been regularly visited, and it was only necessary in two instances to find fault, both in bakehouses, one at Galmpton, where the sewers were in an insanitary condition, and the other at Avonwick, where the ventilation was defective

The Sanitary Inspectors have, as usual, carried out their duties in a satisfactory manner

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

Henry Johnson

Totnes, April 19th, 1905.

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